THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has constituted a Committee to study the issues arising out of traffic by-pass through grey market in International Long Distance Services and its repercussions on Inter-Connection Usage charges. The Committee comprises of the representatives of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, International Long Distance Operators and Department of Telecommunications.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The report is likely to be submitted in a month.

Dead telephone cable in Idgah Exchange

1947. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a telephone cable having the pairs 19/5/20/1 and 20/2 under the Idgah Exchange, is dead for the last one month;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the DET/SDO/JE was informed about it;

(c) the action taken by Government against the officials not taking interest in this regard; and

(d) whether the telephone rent from the affected subscribers would be waived off, due to the negligence of the irresponsible officials involved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) The underground cable pertaining to MDF, vertical Nos. 19/5, 20/1 and 20/2 was faulty from 13.7.2003 to 16.7.2003. On this cable of 400 pairs, 200 Nos. were working and 104 subscribers were affected.

(b) Yes, Sir. DET/SDO/JE were aware of the fault and they rectified it after localizing it.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

(d) In all cases where telephones remain faulty for more than 7 days, automatic rent rebate is granted by MTNL, Delhi.

Amendment of Telegraph Act

†1948. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to amend the Telegraph Act; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Bill to amend the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 has been introduced in the Lok Sabha on 4th August, 2003 to establish Universal Service Obligation Fund to meet the Universal Service Obligation (USO). USO is the Government's commitment to provide access to basic telegraph services to people in rural and remote areas at affordable and reasonable prices.

Restructuring of Media Lab Asia

1949. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Media Lab Asia (MLA) is restructured in July, 2003;

(b) if so, the details thereof including annual budgetary support from Government institutions associated with the project and the details of funding envisages from Non-Governmental Organisations, if any;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.